(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to prevent the epidemic?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Directorate of Wheat Research, Karnal has reported that all Indian wheat varieties including PBW-343 are resistant to stem rust races prevalent in India due to Sr. 31 gene. However, this gene has been reported to have become susceptible to stem rust in Africa. UG-99 race is not present in India but the Directorate of Wheat Research has, nevertheless, initiated preemptive action to incorporate resistance to this race.

Providing fertilizers and chemicals at reasonable rates

1054. SHRI VARINDER SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to provide fertilizers and chemicals to poor farmers at reasonable rates;

(b) whether any specific policy has been laid down in consultation with State Governments; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) In order to make the fertilizer available at affordable rates to all categories of farmers, the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of Urea is statutorily notified under Fertilizer Control Order, 1985 and MRP of the decontrolled phosphatic and potassic (P&K) fertilizers, such as Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potash (MOP) and Nitrogenous Phosphatic Potassic (NPK) complexes are fixed under the Concession Scheme of P&K fertilizers except Single Super Phosphate (SSP) whose price is fixed by the State Governments. The MRPs of these fertilizers except SSP in some States has not been increased since last three years though their cost of production/import price has increased. There is no Government control on pricing of chemicals as the chemical industry has been deregulated.

Training programme for farmers in Tamil Nadu

1055. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared any action plan for promotion, extension and upgradation of tranining programmes for farmers and soil testing facilities through National Chemical and Fertilizer Corporation or any other Government Corporation in the dry farming region of Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any review of the work done so far, has been conducted in the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (d) No action plan has been prepared for promotion, extension and upgradation of traning programmes for farmers for soil testing facilities through the Government Corporations in the dry farming regions of the country including Tamil Nadu. However, the State Government of Tamil Nadu has already established Soil Testing Laboratories in all the districts inclusive of the dry farming regions. In addition, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Coimbatore imparts training to farmers on soil test based integrated nutrient management and conducts demonstrations for its usefulness on their fields including dry land farming areas of Tamil Nadu.

Fishery Development under Narmada Valley Development Project

†1056. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Governments have sent proposals to Governments regarding development of fishery in the reservoirs under construction/ constructed under Narmada Valley Development Project and the action being taken by Government in this regard; and

(b) the amount released to the State Governments and the amount yet to be released and by when the balance amount would be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) On receipt of a proposal from the State Government of Madhya Pradesh for development of fisheries in the six reservoirs by the Narmada Valley Development Department (NVDD), a sum of Rs. 100 lakhs of central assistance as first instalment was released to the State Government during September, 2004. The balance amount of Rs. 52.49 lakhs will be released to the State Government of Madhya Pradesh on receipt of the Utilization Certificate of the above released amount as well as the progress report from the NVDD. Proposal is awaited.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.